

Legal Services Society

Service Plan

2005/2006 — 2007/2008

Update September 2005



Legal
Services
Society

British Columbia
www.lss.bc.ca

Providing legal aid in British Columbia since 1979

For more information

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Cover art: Denise Tremblay

Cover photo top: Family Duty Counsel (FDC) Kathryn Ferriss (left) and FDC Intake Assistant Slavka Andrejevic at Robson Square Provincial Court, Vancouver. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Cover photo middle: Legal information outreach workers (from left, back row) Kim Shelley (Victoria), Janet Freeman (Vancouver), Shelley Robertson (Prince George), Christine Lougheed (Kamloops); (from left, front row) Carol Shaeffer (Prince Rupert), Ginny Aiello (Terrace), Sherry Scott (Kelowna), and Sandy Garneau (Surrey) help clients around the province use LSS services. Missing from photo: Michelle Angus (Terrace). *Brenda Rose photo*

Cover photo bottom: Legal information outreach worker Sandy Garneau (Surrey) demonstrates the LawLINK kiosk in Port Coquitlam Provincial Courthouse. *Brenda Rose photo*

Letter from the Board Chair to the Minister Responsible and Accountability Statement

July 15, 2005

The Honourable Wally Oppal
Attorney General
Province of British Columbia

Dear Mr. Attorney:

I am pleased to present you with the updated *Legal Services Society (LSS) Service Plan 2005/2006 – 2007/2008*. This plan has been revised to reflect the LSS funding levels approved by your ministry in March 2005 and related service developments. It also provides a preliminary updated financial outlook for the period.

In February 2005, the provincial government announced an annual \$4.6 million increase to the society's core funding. This has allowed us to improve family services by making Provincial Court family duty counsel a permanent program and expanding this service to Supreme Courts in BC. In addition, we have now implemented the planned extended family referrals and limited scope Supreme Court family referrals programs.

At our annual planning meeting in June 2005, the LSS board, in establishing service priorities for 2006 – 2009, extended the LawLINE, LawLINK, and legal information outreach worker initiatives to March 31, 2006, and committed to seeking ongoing provincial government funding for these services as part of its budget submission later this year.

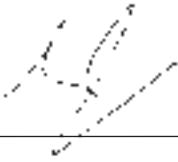
LSS staff, management, and board members are committed to providing quality legal services for low income British Columbians in the most efficient and effective ways possible. Our values of leadership, respect, and working with others guide us in fulfilling our mandate and contribute to the development of a culture of excellence in BC's justice system. We look forward to working with you to enhance our ability to meet essential client needs, in particular by filling significant gaps that remain in family and other civil law and eliminating the uncertainty in funding for immigration law.

LSS continues to emphasize innovative and collaborative approaches to serving clients. An ongoing challenge, however, is the need to improve our ability to manage workloads so we can support the full array of client services. This challenge is exacerbated by the need for LSS to regularly obtain stable funding for effective new services such as LawLINE. While justice system reforms can provide LSS with important opportunities to advance access to services for people with low incomes, these same reforms can also increase expectations and demands on the society. For example, many of the recommendations in the recently released Family Justice Reform Working Group report will require sufficient and reliable legal aid funding.* Another critical challenge is the ongoing decline in the number of lawyers who are willing to accept legal aid referrals. We have now eliminated tariff holdbacks, and several other tariff renewal initiatives are underway to improve the legal aid system.

* The report, entitled *A New Justice System for Families and Children*, calls for significant changes to improve the family justice system and recommends that LSS "continue its innovative work in the family law area."

This service plan was prepared under the direction of the LSS board in accordance with the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act. The board is accountable for the contents of the plan, including the selection of performance measures and targets. The plan is consistent with the BC government's strategic priorities and overall strategic plan. All significant assumptions, policy decisions, and identified risks, as of July 15, 2005, have been considered. The board is accountable for ensuring the society achieves the specific objectives it has identified and for measuring and reporting on its actual performance.

Yours truly,



Geoffrey Cowper, QC
Chair, LSS Board of Directors

Photos facing page, from the top:

Kim Grittner, Clinic Administrator and Intake Legal Assistant, in the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Kamala Namasivayam, Intake Legal Assistant, working in the Surrey Provincial Courthouse intake office. *Sandy Gameau photo*

(From left) Carolyn Rhee-Thompson, Supervisor, Facilities and Administration; Eugene Wandell, Manager, Finance; and Marie Harlow, General Accountant, meet at the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Alex Tang, Data Control Analyst, in the server room of the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Allan Parker, LawLINE Program Manager/Lawyer (left), and Bruno Drucker, LawLINE Lawyer, consult in the library at the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*

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Roxana Aune, LawLINE Paralegal, assists clients over the phone from the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Organizational Overview

The Legal Services Society is an independent, non-profit organization established by statute in 1979 to provide legal aid services in British Columbia.

- legal information websites and publications,
- various intermediaries, and
- non-profit agencies.

Core services

LSS offers a continuum of services that includes legal representation, advice, advocacy, information, and education. These services include:

- legal representation for financially eligible people with serious family problems and/or serious criminal problems, and for some immigration, mental health law, and prison law matters;
- legal advice through the Brydges line, duty counsel, and enhanced LawLINE; and
- legal information services through LawLINE, legal information outreach workers, intake staff, publications, and websites.

LSS services are delivered through —

- staff at 7 regional centres,
- local agents in 20 communities,
- about 1,000 private bar lawyers*,
- a province-wide toll-free call centre,
- a province-wide toll-free legal information line (LawLINE),

Representation and advice programs

LSS provides legal representation to financially eligible people whose legal problems fall within the society's coverage guidelines.

Criminal, family, and immigration law

LSS provides legal representation for people who —

- are charged with a criminal offence and face jail, loss of livelihood, or deportation if found guilty;
- are victims of domestic violence and need a restraining order;
- have a child or children who are at risk and a supervised access order or restraining order is needed to protect them;
- need a change to their current custody or access order to ensure their and/or their child(ren)'s safety;
- need a non-removal order to prevent their child(ren) from being permanently removed from the province;

* Defined as a lawyer who has accepted a referral for a case opened during the year.

- are parents and the Ministry of Children and Family Development has taken or is threatening to take their children away from them; or
- face a refugee or deportation hearing and their case has a reasonable chance of success.

Mental health law

LSS provides legal representation at review panels for clients involuntarily detained under the Mental Health Act, and at BC Review Board hearings for clients found unfit to stand trial or not criminally responsible because of a mental disorder.

Prison law

LSS provides legal representation and assistance for prisoners as required under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in situations where clients are unable to protect their own liberty interests in a prison setting.



Slavka Andrejevic, FDC Intake Assistant (left), and Kathryn Ferriss, Family Duty Counsel, at the Robson Square Provincial Courthouse, Vancouver. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Duty counsel

Staff and private bar lawyers provide clients with advice about the charges against them, court procedures, and their legal rights (including the right to counsel and the right to apply for legal aid). This service includes representation at bail hearings, entering a guilty plea, or speaking to sentence.

LSS also provides duty counsel in family courts across BC. Family duty counsel give advice to unrepresented clients and speak on their behalf in court on simple matters, but they do not provide representation at trial.

Brydges line

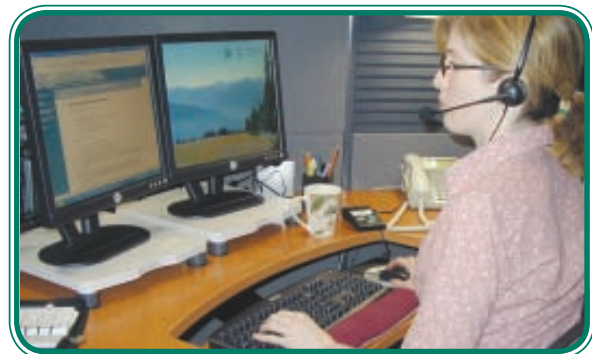
The Brydges line is a province-wide toll-free telephone service providing prompt access to legal advice for people who are arrested or detained, or who are under active investigation by the police or other law enforcement agencies but are not yet charged.

Legal information programs

People with low incomes who fall outside LSS financial eligibility and coverage criteria can still get legal information to help them with their legal problems. LSS provides legal information through LawLINE; its publications and websites; staff at LSS local agent offices and regional centres, including legal information outreach workers and intake workers; and other agencies such as public libraries and government agent offices across the province.

LawLINE

Staff of LawLINE, the society's province-wide toll-free telephone service, provide callers with information about the law and referrals to other information or services that can help them resolve their legal problems. LawLINE also provides brief legal advice to financially eligible people as part of an initiative that has been extended to March 31, 2006 — see page 4.



Janna Cumming, LawLINE Lawyer, using the Family Law website from her office in the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*



Donna Crawford, Administrative Assistant, Legal Information, Technology, and Communications, distributes LSS publications from the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Publications

LSS produces plain language publications about the law. These are distributed through LSS regional centres and local agent offices, public libraries, and government agent offices, as well as through some community organizations. Many are also available on LSS websites.

Websites

LSS produces four websites:

- The LSS website provides information about the society and its services, as well as electronic publications about various aspects of the law. www.lss.bc.ca
- The Family Law in British Columbia website is designed to help people understand and use the law to resolve their family law problems. It is also a resource for people who are trying to help friends or clients. The site includes plain language publications on family law matters, self-help materials, and more. www.familylaw.lss.bc.ca
- LawLINK is designed to help clients and their advocates find legal information and self-help resources on the Internet. Public access computers featuring this website are located at all LSS regional centres and government agent offices, as well as some LSS local agent offices, provincial courthouses, and local community agencies. www.lawlink.bc.ca

- The Electronic Law Library provides online resources for advocates and advanced researchers looking for detailed legal information on topics ranging from Aboriginal law to young offenders. www.bcpl.gov.bc.ca/ell

LSS also supports PovNet, a searchable website for people on welfare, advocates, and community groups involved in anti-poverty work. PovNet provides information on and links to poverty law resources. www.povnet.org

Advocate education and support

LSS offers advocacy skills training and education in substantive law for community advocates and intermediaries. This includes an annual provincial conference on skills development as well as regional conferences on skills and changes to the law held throughout the year.

Innovation at LSS

As part of our commitment to innovation in the delivery of legal services, LSS has piloted a number of successful projects since fall 2002 and is now recommending that they continue as full-time programs.

Evaluations of family duty counsel, LawLINE advice services, and LawLINK indicate that these services are highly successful in helping clients resolve their legal problems, either without litigation or by giving them the advice and information they need to represent themselves in legal proceedings. The evaluations also show that LSS services are mutually enhancing; for example, family clients frequently use LawLINE and LawLINK in conjunction with family duty counsel. Three initiatives highlighted in the *LSS Service Plan 2004/2005 – 2006/2007* — the society's commitment to the Public Legal Education and Information Working Group and to strategic performance management, and family duty counsel — have already become permanent programs.

Proven initiatives to be established as ongoing programs

LSS is recommending that the following successful initiatives become ongoing programs, and has extended them to March 31, 2006.

Enhanced LawLINE

In September 2003, LSS initiated a pilot project to expand LawLINE to include brief legal services. Brief services include legal advice, help with correspondence and documents, and phone calls to third parties on a client's behalf.



Legal Information Outreach Worker Sandy Garneau (Surrey) demonstrates the LawLINK kiosk in the Port Coquitlam Provincial Courthouse. *Brenda Rose photo*

LawLINK and legal information outreach workers

The LawLINK website and public access computers allow LSS to provide clients with low-cost and sustainable access to legal information. In 2004, the number of public access computer locations grew to include some local agent offices, courthouses, and community agencies.

Legal information outreach workers (LIOWs), based in LSS regional centres, provide the education, awareness, support, and outreach clients and intermediaries need to understand and use LSS services, including the LawLINK website, family duty counsel, and LawLINE. This work ensures true access to legal aid for low income people is available in the communities served by LSS regional centres, and is critical to the continued success of the society's initiatives and new programs.



LIOWs (from left, back row) Kim Shelley (Victoria), Janet Freeman (Vancouver), Shelley Robertson (Prince George), Christine Loughheed (Kamloops); (from left, front row) Carol Shaeffer (Prince Rupert), Ginny Aiello (Terrace), Sherry Scott (Kelowna), and Sandy Garneau (Surrey), help clients around the province use LSS services. LIOW Michelle Angus (Terrace) is missing from the photo. *Brenda Rose photo*

New initiatives

LSS will undertake the following initiatives within the next planning period:

Supreme Court duty counsel and advice services

Duty counsel give advice to unrepresented clients and speak on their behalf in court on simple matters, but they do not provide representation at trial. This initiative will provide assistance to low income litigants who do not qualify for a legal aid referral and therefore must represent themselves in Supreme Court.

Limited Supreme Court family referrals

To further address the needs of unrepresented litigants in Supreme Court, LSS is introducing limited scope Supreme Court referrals. These will give the referring lawyers enough hours to help clients draft documents and negotiate with opposing parties or counsel, and provide clients with general advice to support them as they do most of the work on their own.

Family collaborative law project

This project aims to test the effectiveness of the collaborative law model as a vehicle for settling legal aid family law cases. Feedback from the LSS mediation initiative (implemented and completed last fiscal year) indicates that legal aid lawyers support collaborative law referrals as a cost-effective way to provide brief dispute resolution services. The feedback also suggests that the collaborative process could address the power imbalances that often make mediation inappropriate in cases where there has been violence.

Extended family services referrals

In 2003/2004, LSS implemented an extended family services pilot to fund a limited number of trials. The effectiveness of this pilot was limited by the fact that funding was available only until March 31, 2004. The resulting requirement that all services be completed by year-end did not mesh with trial scheduling in most locations. To provide appropriate services, LSS must be able to commit to funding such cases beyond fiscal year-end. In this new initiative, LSS will provide additional referrals in cases that require legal aid representation to ensure a fair trial. This initiative will also help LSS establish appropriate selection criteria and case management procedures.

Quality assurance

LSS plans to expand its quality assurance (QA) program to close gaps in the current system for both quality enhancements and quality control mechanisms. The LSS quality assurance program will be designed to —

- ensure effective, quality service to LSS clients by private bar referral lawyers; and
- be cost-effective, fair, and transparent.

LSS will actively work with other justice system participants to create an effective and efficient QA program.

Client contributions

LSS is examining the feasibility of implementing a client contribution/expanded eligibility program for its criminal, family, and child protection (Child, Family and Community Service Act) clients. Under such a program, clients would be expected to contribute to the costs of their legal aid if their incomes exceeded current guidelines, but did not exceed a limit beyond which they would not qualify for legal aid. Some costs could be recovered through agreements to pay, liens on real property, application fees, or other means.

Tariff renewal

In early 2004, LSS began a review of its tariff structure. The objectives of this review are to establish a tariff that attracts and retains private bar lawyers who will provide quality services, to promote efficiency and effectiveness within the justice system, and to establish criteria for regular tariff evaluation. The review has confirmed that tariff renewal is essential to ensure lawyers continue to accept LSS referrals and clients receive high standards of service.

LSS plans to refine the tariff structure based on the recommendations in this review, and will actively engage other justice system participants in promoting procedural changes that ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the tariff system and the larger justice system.

Governance at LSS

LSS is managed by a nine-member board of directors; five directors are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and four are appointed by the Law Society of BC. At July 15, 2005, the following people made up the board:

- Geoffrey Cowper, QC, Chair
- D. Brent Adair, QC
- Janice Comeau
- Leah George-Wilson
- Larry Goble
- Bruce Hardy
- John M. Hogg, QC
- D. Mayland McKimm, QC
- Greg Stacey

Kamloops Regional Centre staff (from left) Christine Lougheed, Legal Information Outreach Worker; Marla Krusel, Intake Legal Assistant; Mayumi Paravantes, Receptionist; Kathleen Kendall, Managing Lawyer, Family; and Charlene Loewen, Senior Legal Secretary, meet in the boardroom. *Janet Jeffrey photo*

Board appointments must take into account the need for the board to have a range of knowledge, skills, and experience in five areas:

- the management of public and private sector organizations;
- the law, the courts, and alternative dispute resolution processes;
- legal aid;
- the cultural and geographic diversity of BC; and
- the special legal needs of people with low incomes.

Photos facing page, from the top:

(From left) Lisa Lefebvre, Administrative Assistant, Legal Information, Technology, and Communications; Catherine McNeil, Director, Finance and Corporate Services; Aruna Mehtani, Receptionist, Surrey Regional Centre; and James Deitch, Manager, Tariff Services, in the intake waiting room during the Vancouver Regional Centre Open House, November 2004.

Fran Auckland, Fieldworker, is based in the Vancouver Regional Centre.

Myrna Segovia, Eligibility/Complaints Co-ordinator (left), and Alicia Rosales, Duty Counsel Co-ordinator/Administrative Assistant, Field Operations, work together in the Vancouver Regional Centre.

Cynthia Bartholomew, LSS Librarian, at work in the stacks.

Frank Lin, Payroll Administrator; Noreen Finnerty, Manager, Human Resources; Chris Pendleton, Human Resources Advisor; Corey Parker, Administrative Assistant, Human Resources; and Ruby Bains Aulakh, Human Resources Advisor, meet in the Vancouver Regional Centre.

Denise Tremblay photos



Strategic Context

Our mission

To assist low income individuals to resolve their legal problems by providing a spectrum of services that promotes their effective participation in the justice system.

Our vision

An innovative, collaborative legal aid system responding to the needs of low income people throughout British Columbia.

Our mandate

The society was established by the Legal Services Society Act, S.B.C. 2002, Ch. 30 (the act), for the purpose of developing and maintaining an effective and efficient system of legal aid for low income individuals in British Columbia.

The society's objects, under section 9 of the act, are —

- to assist low income individuals to resolve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice for low income individuals;
- to establish and administer an effective and efficient system for providing legal aid to low income individuals in British Columbia; and
- to provide advice to the Attorney General respecting legal aid.

Our values

Making a difference through leadership, respect, and working with others.



Planning Context and Key Strategic Issues

An environmental scan and risk analysis was conducted by the LSS Executive Management Committee in the fall of 2004 to determine the main factors that will affect the society's ability to achieve its intended results in the next three years.

LSS compared the key strategic issues emerging from this analysis with those identified in the 2004 – 2007 planning process, and adjusted its strategies in its 2005 – 2008 plan accordingly.

The key strategic issues for 2005 – 2008 are the following:

1) Managing to capacity

LSS recognizes that its capable and committed employees form one of the society's main strengths. A dedicated staff, combined with a solid infrastructure and a flexible organization, has allowed LSS to adjust to a major change in its service model quickly and in highly innovative and effective ways. At the same time, rapid change has made maintaining basic management practices more difficult. LSS must now place a priority on enhancing its internal structures to manage workload and to foster strong internal working relationships.

Stakeholders have high expectations that the society will continue to develop innovative ways to serve clients and address systemic problems such as inadequate tariffs. LSS must manage these expectations in line with its capacity.



Sharon Porter, Executive Assistant, Field Operations and Human Resources; Gulnar Najjuma, Executive Assistant, Executive Office; and Joy-Ann Lee, former Executive Assistant, at main reception during the Vancouver Regional Centre Open House, November 2004.

Denise Tremblay photo

2) Fiscal circumstances

To date, there is no indication that the society's major funders will increase their support for LSS. Most new funding realized by LSS in recent years has been for projects. Although stakeholders show confidence in the society's ability to provide legal aid within the constraints of a lower budget, a reliance on project-based funding undermines the society's ability to sustain piloted services that have proven valuable and effective.

3) Tariff system pressure

Last year, the society's service plan identified the decline in availability of tariff lawyers as a key strategic issue. Feedback from both the tariff lawyers' satisfaction survey and the tariff review confirm the critical nature of this issue. The failure of tariff rates to keep up with inflation and increasing court case complexity place additional stress on the tariff system. Without tariff renewal, more lawyers will decline legal aid referrals, making service disruptions a real possibility.



Ingrid Kapil, Disbursements Assistant; Rochelle Appleby, Tariff Policy Lawyer; Jan Shiels, Case Management Assistant; James Deitch, Manager, Tariff Services; and Shirley Li, Administrative Legal Assistant, Tariff, meet in the Vancouver Regional Centre.
Denise Tremblay photo

4) Justice reform

As a key participant in justice system renewal in BC and the province's primary legal aid provider, LSS is in a unique position to contribute to justice reform for people with low incomes. At the same time, the reform process will likely result in changes and initiatives over which LSS has little influence. The risk to LSS is that these changes may require the society to be reactive rather than proactive, and may lead to increased costs and reduced flexibility in delivering legal aid services.



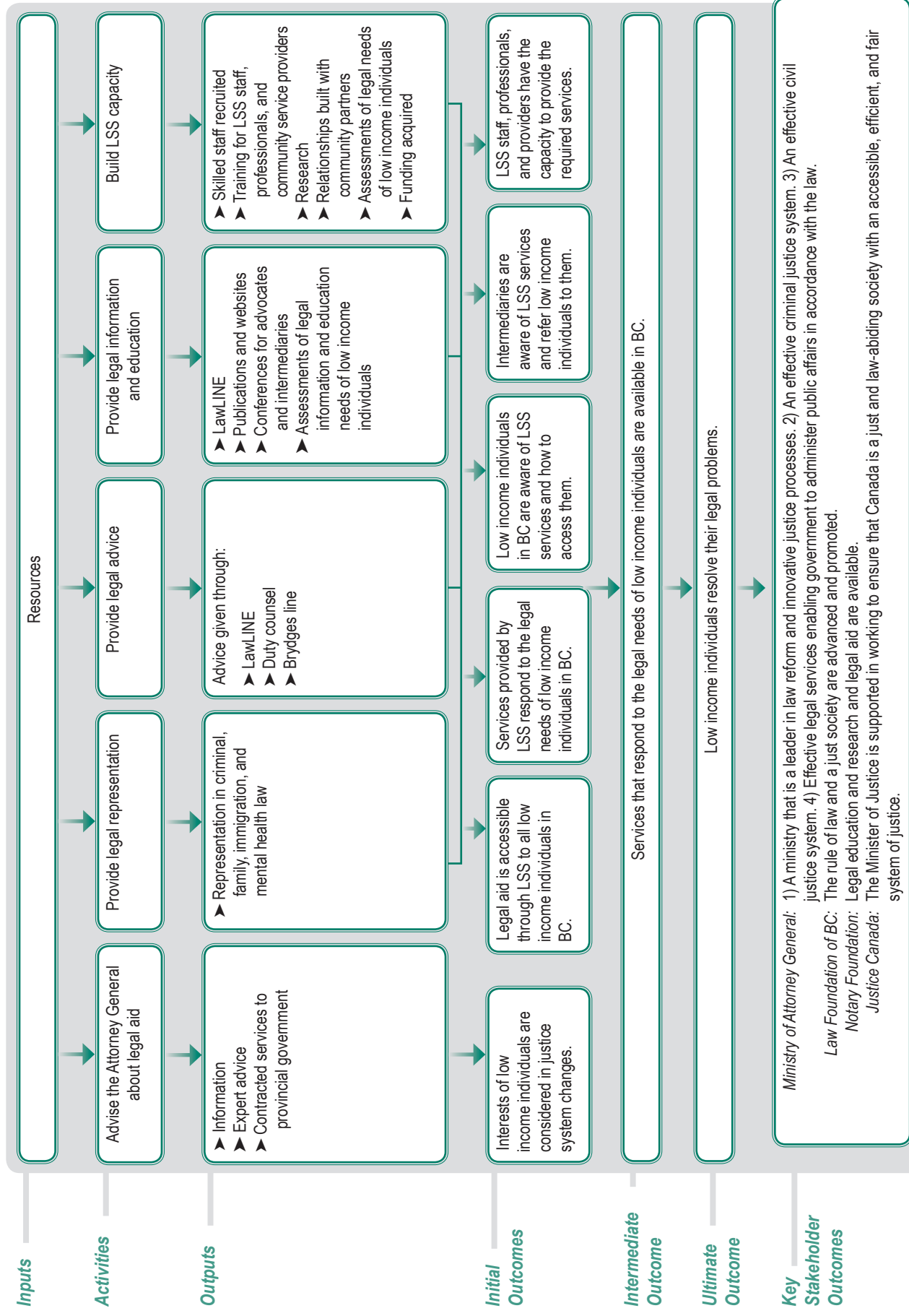
Julie Zaplotinsky, Assistant to Port Alberni Local Agent Barbara Smith, at her desk. *Barbara Smith Photo*

5) Reputation and credibility

LSS has worked hard to establish its reputation as a reliable and effective service provider. The society has proven itself to be an enterprising agency that can get things done. An ongoing commitment to evaluate and learn from its initiatives further enhances the society's success and credibility. Governments and other stakeholders demonstrate confidence in the LSS board, management, and staff.

This positive reputation has increased the interest of other service providers in collaborating with the society to meet client needs. In response, LSS has made efforts to improve communication, collaboration, and co-operation with stakeholders in recognition of the critical contribution they make to the society's ability to meet its goals.

The Society Logic Model



Goal, Objectives, Key Strategies and Initiatives, Performance Measures and Targets

The objectives and related strategies outlined in this service plan were designed to ensure that the society provides appropriate legal aid services to support our goal, and that we have the ongoing capacity to do so.

Long-term goal

Services that respond to the legal needs of low income individuals are available in BC.

Objective 1

Build and sustain the necessary capacity in LSS staff, systems and processes, professionals, and other service providers to provide LSS services.

Supporting strategies

- Use technology to streamline processes and to build and share knowledge
- Provide tools, training, and support to enable staff and service providers to succeed
- Evaluate and improve functions and programs
- Use alternate service delivery models and third-party providers/professionals to maximize capacity
- Provide clear direction and leadership
- Maintain efficient corporate management functions

Related initiatives

- Implement computer system advances in accounting, knowledge management, and the intranet
- Conduct process and business reviews to evaluate systems and structures, and implement viable changes
- Expand the employee wellness initiative
- Develop and implement new quality assurance measures
- Implement affordable and viable recommendations from the tariff review and lawyers' survey

Objective 1: Performance measures and targets

Measure	Baseline 2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Overall rating by LSS tariff lawyers of their satisfaction with the support provided by LSS	68% of tariff lawyers satisfied (established 2003/2004)	Not measured this year	Not measured this year	75% of tariff lawyers satisfied
Overall LSS employee satisfaction rating	Establish baseline	Not measured this year	Not measured this year	Improve on baseline

Objective 2

Build the financial capacity to maintain proven initiatives and sustain core services.

Supporting strategies

- Seek revenue-generating opportunities to use existing capacity
- Seek innovative funding arrangements with other justice partners

Related initiatives

- Assess the feasibility of various client contribution approaches to recover some costs and provide funding for client services
- Explore direct funding relationships with the federal government in LSS mandate-related areas of federal responsibility

Objective 2: Performance measures and targets

Measure *	Baseline 2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Proven initiatives currently funded by short-term funding (list); and budget required for each (\$\$)	4 initiatives totalling \$3.72 million	Reduced reliance on short-term funding to maintain proven initiatives	Reduced reliance on short-term funding to maintain proven initiatives	Reduced reliance on short-term funding to maintain proven initiatives

* This measure is under review.

Baseline calculation

Initiative	Budget 2004/2005
Family duty counsel	\$ 2,000,000
LawLINE	\$ 1,312,500
LawLINK	\$ 171,000
LIOWs	\$ 232,000
Total	\$ 3,715,500

Objective 3

Improve the responsiveness of LSS services to the legal needs of low income individuals.

Supporting strategies

- Provide representation in criminal, family, child protection, immigration, mental health, prison, and Aboriginal law
- Provide advice and information for all areas of law
- Examine partnerships and a variety of delivery mechanisms to maximize the accessibility of services for the available dollars
- Assess client needs to ensure services are appropriate

Related initiatives

- Expand family duty counsel to Supreme Court
- Expand family services through new Supreme Court limited scope referrals and a pilot project to assess the viability of collaborative law
- Establish enhanced LawLINE services (advice services) as a permanent program
- Establish LawLINK as a permanent program
- Evaluate and, with funds reserved for this purpose, support appropriate community agencies' mediation initiatives in child protection
- Complete an Aboriginal needs assessment to enable LSS to develop mutually supportive and collaborative relationships with BC's First Nations
- Measure the society's performance in meeting client needs

Objective 3: Performance measures and targets				
Measure	Baseline 2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Overall rating of client satisfaction with LSS services	N/A	Establish baseline	Not measured this year	Not measured this year
Overall rating by intermediaries of how well LSS responds to the needs of low income individuals in BC	N/A	N/A	Establish baseline	Not measured this year

Objective 4

Increase awareness of LSS services among intermediaries and clients so that more low income individuals with legal needs are referred to appropriate LSS services.

Supporting strategies

- Use appropriate media to bring services to the attention of clients and intermediaries
- Collaborate with communities and intermediaries to increase awareness, credibility, and referrals for LSS services

Related initiatives

- Continue the 2004/2005 campaign to increase awareness of LSS services
- Improve access to LSS services by providing a permanent legal information outreach worker at each regional centre to help clients access the appropriate legal resources
- Survey intermediaries about their awareness of LSS services

Objective 4: Performance measures and targets				
Measure	Baseline 2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Overall rating by intermediaries of their level of awareness of LSS services	N/A	N/A	Establish baseline	Not measured this year

Objective 5

Apply LSS influence to ensure the legal needs of low income individuals are considered in justice system reform.

Supporting strategies

- Advise key stakeholders on the effects of justice system change on low income individuals
- Participate in justice reform initiatives
- Work collaboratively with justice system partners such as the federal government, courts, and private bar to address issues of mutual concern

Related initiatives

- Provide the Attorney General with reports and advice
- Participate in Justice Review Working Groups in criminal, family, and civil law
- Lead the Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI) Working Group to co-ordinate PLEI in BC

Objective 5: Performance measures and targets				
Measure	Baseline 2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Resources utilized by LSS in providing the Ministry of Attorney General advice regarding legal aid	More than 500 hours	This measure may be revised as justice reform activities evolve	To be determined	To be determined

Alignment with Government's Strategic Plan

On February 8, 2005, the Honourable Iona Campagnolo delivered her Speech from the Throne to open the 6th session of the 37th Parliament. The speech outlined “five great goals for a golden decade”:

- 1) To make BC the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.
- 2) To lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.
- 3) To build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk, and seniors.
- 4) To lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none.
- 5) To create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

LSS supports goal 3 by providing services that respond to the special legal needs of low income individuals and help them resolve their legal problems. LSS makes legal representation, legal advice, and legal information and education available, and takes steps to ensure intermediaries as well as low income individuals are aware of these services. LSS also collaborates with a wide range of justice system partners and other stakeholders to provide innovative, cost-effective services to enhance access to the justice system for low income individuals.

In addition, LSS provides the Attorney General with information and expert advice to inform justice system decisions affecting low income individuals. Through its participation in justice reform activities and legal research, LSS uses its influence to ensure that justice system changes address the legal needs of low income individuals.

Alignment with Goals of Other Key Stakeholders

LSS works closely with its partners in the justice system to seek cost-effective ways of meeting the legal needs of low income individuals while also advancing the goals of all stakeholders. LSS acknowledges the support and collaboration of the Ministry of Attorney General, the Notary Foundation of BC, the Law Foundation of BC, and Justice Canada. Funding from each of these partners is used to support the society's legal information, education, advice, and representation programs. In turn, LSS services contribute to the following outcomes, which are encompassed in the goals of these stakeholders:

Ministry of Attorney General

- 1) A ministry that is a leader in law reform and innovative justice processes.
- 2) An effective criminal justice system.
- 3) An effective civil justice system.
- 4) Effective legal services enabling government to administer public affairs in accordance with the law.

Law Foundation of BC

The rule of law and a just society are advanced and promoted.

Notary Foundation of BC

Legal education and research and legal aid are available.

Justice Canada

The Minister of Justice is supported in working to ensure that Canada is a just and law-abiding society with an accessible, efficient, and fair system of justice.

LSS Summary Financial Outlook

2005 – 2008 *(in millions)*

	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Forecast	Forecast
Revenue					
Government of BC grant	\$ 64.0	\$ 55.9	\$ 62.5	\$ 62.5	\$ 62.5
Federal Investment Fund (includes large federal cases)	1.6	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.3
Law Foundation	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.3
Notary Foundation	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Other	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9
Total revenue	71.1	64.7	70.6	70.6	70.6
Expenses					
Tariff	51.1	41.1	45.3	45.9	46.0
Large federal cases	0.7	0.0	0.7	0.7	0.7
Regional centres/local agents	5.5	5.9	6.7	6.7	6.7
Public Legal Education and Information	2.3	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0
Strategic priorities	4.6	3.5	4.0	3.4	3.3
Federal Investment Fund initiatives	1.0	0.5	2.7	2.7	2.7
Other	5.1	8.2	9.2	9.2	9.2
Total expenses	69.2	60.7	70.6	70.6	70.6
Net income	\$ 1.9	\$ 4.0	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0
Full-time equivalents *†	145.1	148.5	148.5	148.5	148.5

* Not including term positions
† As at fiscal year-end

Key assumptions	Forecast risks and sensitivities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOU with the Ministry of Attorney General will be amended to reflect the approved budget, including providing \$1.7 million for immigration services (\$800,000 in provincial funding and \$900,000 in federal funding). Support from the Federal Investment Fund will be extended through 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 in the amount of \$2.6 million per year. No material change in the number of cases prosecuted by the province. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unanticipated increases in the volume of cases. Inflationary pressures. The costs and/or timing of exceptional cases. Cancellation of support from the Federal Investment Fund. Change in interest rates could affect the investment return and the funding from the Notary Foundation.

Appendix 1:

Departmental Work Linked to Service Plan Objectives



This section indicates how the core work of staff in each LSS department contributes to specific objectives set out in this service plan. It should be recognized that all the society's core work is interrelated and critical to the achievement of the society's goal. The work of any one department may contribute to many objectives; however, only the primary linkages are outlined below.

Appeals

Objective #5

- Applying LSS influence by moving cases forward to the Appeals Courts where clarification of the law is needed, a miscarriage of justice has occurred, or representation is required in the interests of justice

Audit and Investigation

Objective #2

- Building financial capacity by implementing and monitoring systems that ensure LSS is getting the services it pays for

Objective #3

- Improving responsiveness of LSS services through quality assurance

Photos from top of page: Coordinator, Service Projects (family duty counsel) Sherry MacLennan in her office in the Vancouver Regional Centre.

Tariff Accounts Examiner, Jennifer Ho-Wang, in her Vancouver Regional Centre office.

Staff in training at the Vancouver Regional Centre.

Janice Staryk, Manager, Tariff Operations, at her desk in the Vancouver Regional Centre.

Sharon Porter, Executive Assistant, Field Operations and Human Resources, at the Vancouver Regional Centre.

Denise Tremblay photos

Communications

Objective #1

- Supporting LSS staff and service providers with professional communications services

Objective #4

- Increasing awareness of LSS services among various stakeholders

Community Services

Objective #3

- Improving responsiveness of LSS services through, for example, LawLINE and community outreach programs

Objective #4

- Increasing awareness of LSS services through campaigns and community outreach

Corporate Research

Objective #1

- Building LSS capacity by providing timely and accurate information to key decision makers, enabling them to make informed choices regarding policy and other changes

Objective #3

- Improving responsiveness of LSS services through strategic performance management and development of the service plan

Facilities and Administration

Objective #1

- Enhancing LSS capacity by ensuring that the society has adequate facilities to fulfill its mission and that staff have a safe and secure environment to work in

Objective #3

- Enabling responsiveness to client needs through professional facilities and administrative management

Field Operations

Objective #3

- Providing access to legal aid services through regional offices, local agents, and the province-wide call centre

Objective #4

- Increasing awareness of LSS services through LIOWs, intake, and duty counsel services, and by collaborating with advocacy groups for service delivery

Objective #5

- Applying LSS influence by participating in inter-agency committees and taking part in justice reform initiatives and working groups (Justice Review Task Force, Drug Court, and the Supreme Court self-help project)

Finance

Objective #2

- Building financial capacity through astute budgeting and management of LSS funds

Objective #3

- Increasing responsiveness to client needs by prudent use of available funds



Lisa Xiang, Accounting Clerk, in the Vancouver Regional Centre.
Denise Tremblay photo

Human Resources

Objective #1

- Building LSS capacity by providing training, recruitment, and support of LSS staff and service providers, as well as organizational management and wellness programs



Charles Boname, Supervisor, Computer Services, at the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Denise Tremblay photo*

Information Technology

Objective #1

- Supporting and enhancing the capacity of staff and other service providers by building and maintaining computer systems and introducing automation, where appropriate

Objective #3

- Increasing responsiveness to client needs through innovative and expert information systems management

Objective #4

- Increasing awareness of LSS services through websites and LawLINK public access computers

Public Legal Education and Information

Objective #3

- Increasing the responsiveness of LSS services by developing PLEI materials that meet changing client needs



Denise Tremblay, Graphic Designer (at the computer); Jacqueline Wood, Editor (standing); Kathryn Spracklin, Editor (sitting on left); and Candice Lee, Supervisor, Publishing Program, discuss a publishing project at the Vancouver Regional Centre. *Donna Crawford photo*

Objective #4

- Building awareness of LSS services through publications, websites, and work in the field

Objective #5

- Contributing information that helps LSS apply influence in the justice system to ensure the legal needs of low income people are met

Tariff Operations

Objective #1

- Enhancing tariff lawyer capacity by ensuring that lawyers have the information they require to invoice LSS and to receive prompt and accurate payment, and by educating lawyers about tariff policies and procedures

Tariff Services

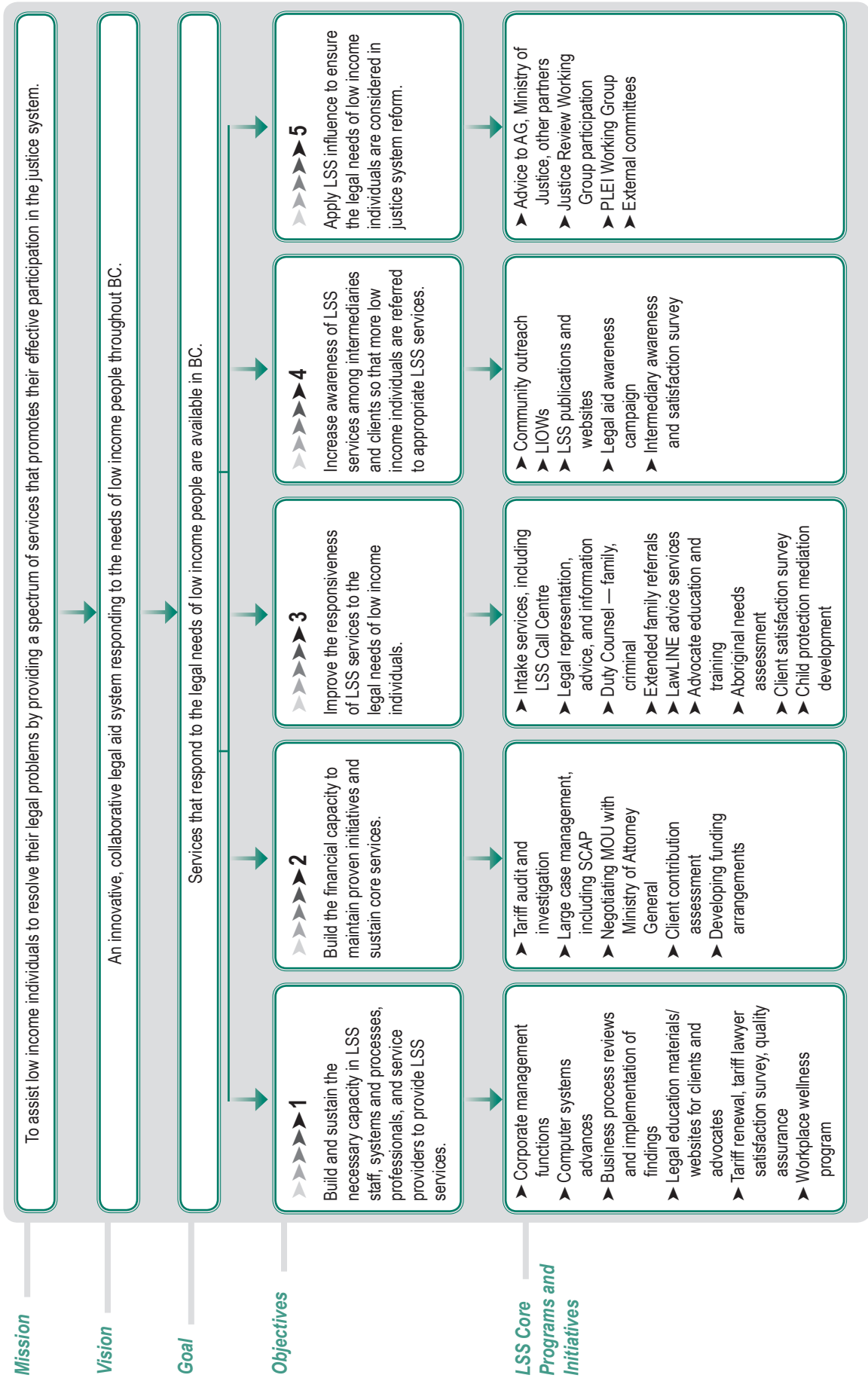
Objective #1

- Enhancing the capacity of service providers through effective management and development of the *Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs*

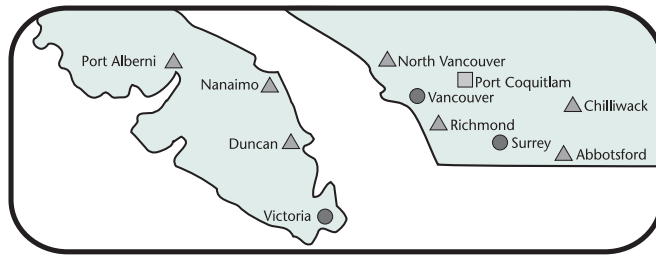
Objective #3

- Increasing the responsiveness of LSS services by developing policy and managing complex cases for low income individuals

Appendix 2: LSS Service Plan Overview



Map of Legal Aid Offices



March 31, 2005